

# A Treatise on Creole Nationalism

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## Abstract

This paper ponders on creole nationalism as a form of ideology espoused by foreign individuals who eventually settle in local communities in another country. Despite the new community's acceptance of them to some extent, locals bear situations forcing creoles to deal with obstacles like achievement of independence and vernacularization of language.

In a sense, creole nationalism promotes glocalization and cultural hybridity as ways to achieve emancipatory enlightenment through understanding the nation as an imagined community and analyzing national literature in the context of the people's struggles in the local communities - all signs of how indigenous sensibilities shape national consciousness.

Result of the study reveals that because of colonial power's historical baggage, the effects of expanding control and dominance in a foreign land are far more obnoxious to the local sensibilities than can ever be envisaged. Result of this paper reveals that creole nationalism can lead to dangerous designs of decadence if they are not thoroughly thought out. Hence, local leaders must emphasize the value of cooperation and communication in this regard in order to create harmonious relationships between all parties. Creoles may know where they stand so as to avoid interfering in local affairs if they are aware of their positions and boundaries.

Keywords: creole, creole nationalism, imagined community, glocalization, national literature.

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## 1. Creole Nationalism

According to Anderson (1983), a creole is a person who was born in the Americas but has (at least theoretically) pure European ancestry (and, by later extension, anywhere outside Europe). Throughout history, certain European leaders and even common people have sought independence from national restrictions. They left their empire and relocated in America because they wanted to conquer new regions. These people have offspring in America and other countries. As an extension of Anderson's initial thesis on imagined community, the newly acquired nation-states contained localized imagined communities as a result of their nobility. Numerous factors, including geographic and political mobilization, independence, the rise of print capitalism, thanks to widespread newspaper distribution and the pervasiveness of vernacular translations of Latin texts, all contributed to the localization and independence of creole nationalism practitioners who no longer sought guidance from their Motherland during the migration of leadership.

T.H. Breen argues in an essay that British Americans in the thirteen colonies had three national impulses: an imperial nationalism, a revolutionary nationalism, and a republican nationalism, according to Doyle & Pamplona (2006). Imperial nationalism refers to the idea that people were a member of the British imperial government even though they lived in American colonies. The concept of revolution nationalism illustrates how opposition to hegemonic control led to the emergence of fresh nationalist movements with revolutionary roots in the new locale founded on human and natural rights in opposition to British hegemony. The new states eventually established separate governments that revered individual freedom and republican citizenship.

The extensive journeys of political conquest were also reflected in religious pilgrimage. According to some insulares (Spaniards born in the Philippines), who were initially subordinate to localized ideals of nationalism before, later becoming a part of localized imaginary community, the Philippines was not an exception to creole nationalism.

Religious pilgrimage was arguably the most extravagant excursion imaginable (Anderson, 1983). It is sufficient to say that Spanish colonialism of the Philippines led directly to the spread of Roman Catholicism in the nation. Spanish friars who were appointed to various local communities were able to share commonalities with the locals, adopting to contextualize Christianity away from imperialistic Spain's influence, using the same parallel of creole nationalism. Individualized faith was more meaningful than how Spain desired the locals to exhibit it due to their devotional and accepting ways.

It will be noted that Spain had a repressive government that gravely damaged people's faith in the institution of government. Nevertheless, people resorted to faith—Catholic faith, within their immediate grasp of religion—which pushed their imaginations. As a result, locals created religious rites that reflected the conventions of their daily lives. Spanish friars became deeply ingrained in the culture through religious conversion, gaining the respect and confidence of the populace. As a result, by virtue of their vocation, they transformed into creole practitioners disguising themselves as Roman Catholics.

On the basis of the aforementioned, creole nationalism in the Philippine context properly gained support from political and religious leaders who exercised influence and dominance over the local population. The claim is that because of their compliance and control, creoles have won "trust" despite the heavy intrusion on native sensitivities. The natives had little choice but to follow the instructions of the foreign leaders who had established down and made friends with them since they were submissive to their requirements.

Creole mindset still plagues post-colonial minds with extreme loyalty to everything imposed on local sensitivities in today's culture. The evolving accounts of immigrant colonists integrated into locally conceived groups are evidence of the growing mingling and cultural appropriation. This leads to a massive amount of cultural blending where the natives mix with the foreigners and vice versa. Creoles deserve to be absorbed, digested, and simply become a part of the cultural flow given how deeply they have permeated people's social consciousness.

### 1.1 *Nation's literature*

According to Mojares (2011), claiming difference—often done on the basis of a claim to a distinct culture, history, and identity—is necessary for the formation of a national culture.

In Rizal's case, his schooling in Europe would put to the test how nationalist his writings would be given his Western influences in contrast to his aim to showcase local sensitivities through community contacts, traditional rituals, and other activities. Such a paradox represents an "assimilationist" position that seeks to place an indio on an intellectual par with his European counterparts, as encouraged in European discourse. On the other hand, the notion of a model individual who takes an autonomous stance and is unaffected by Spanish influence would serve as a compass for promoting regional identity and culture.

In fact, he would later realize a growing national identity founded on an internal discourse that would establish local imperatives, conditions, and sensitivities as an extension of his dualistic existence. In fact, to claim one's own resources for creative production and engage from a dominant discourse that rendered one voiceless and invisible was to declare difference (Mojares, 2011).

Rizal was a prolific writer, as is well known, and as such, his fears and dreads as a foreigner in Europe would be his best tool for expressing the hopeless state of his fellow people as well as raising literary awareness and promoting indigenous linguistics as local causes to unite around. For instance, poetry may be used to immortalize a great love for the nation that would serve as the inspiration for subversion through the use of the pen. Throughout his life, he studied regional folklore like the *pasyon* and *komedya*, as well as Tagalog and regional dialects while traveling across the countryside.

Last but not least, Rizal's enthusiasm for local literature was not just limited to the literal publication of textual works but also extended to fostering intellectual discourse, as in the case of mounting critical conversations (abuses of

Spanish friars disguised as religion) – such oppositions would present him with the highest level of intellectual challenge.

In today's problem of establishing national literature when there is a lack of conversation between authors and the community people, Rizal's lessons remain crucial as a living discourse. Nationalist discourse is more of a rhetorical challenge when authors are deprived of their true selves, when they are cut off from the stories of everyday life, and when they fail to acknowledge complementarities and disputes as living traditions. Because people create identity consciousness, the disease requires intellectual engagement and sensitivity in conveying the challenges and successes of the people.

### 1.2. Social realist fiction

It is impossible to overstate the role that literature education plays in developing a nation's character. Patriotism and nationalism are invoked in *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* via arousing readers' emotions. In actuality, the Rizal Bill, which requires the instruction of Rizal, notably *Noli* and *Fili*, is in charge of molding national character as exemplified by the hero's selfless life. In fact, "Necessary Fictions," which emphasize the role of writing in bringing about social change, articulate the ability to establish confluence between Philippine literature and nationalist rhetoric (Hau, 2000). The subject of theater serves a "dominant function" in the assertion of nationalist rhetoric in the literary work of nationalist Bienvenido L. Lumera (Bayot, 2008).

Without a doubt, the development of social consciousness is a major narrative of the significance of comprehending culture. But, whose culture is being examined? The subject becomes more pressing because of the Philippines' broad language environment and cultural plurality, especially if this variability reveals multiple opinions on what culture embodies. Here, literature offers explanations for the wide range of cultural expressions. It reflects fundamental freedom ideals on the one hand while contextualizing an individual's sense of personal redemption on the other. Such a binary viewpoint leads to a comprehensive understanding of human expressions. Due to the creative and artistic process, it is a work of fiction, but the underlying ideas are based on social realism.

However, paradoxical reality is unavoidable because of the divergent perspectives on freedom, from the general struggles of Filipinos under Spain to the more concrete ones. The idea of a tug-of-war makes them feel even more hopeless and lost. However, literature also has a strong and 'soothing' influence through the employment of idioms and other semiotic devices. Overall, just because a work of literature has fictional elements does not mean that its depiction of people's struggles as part of the historical process should be "sugarcoated." The abuses of friars and the depressing realities of local Filipinos are, in fact, clearly conveyed using fictional characters in Rizal's two works, to use the same example.

Returning to the Rizal Bill, its insistence on the importance of comprehending Rizal's works emphasizes the common nationalist struggles of the Filipino people, even though some of its provisions forbid the public from reading the two novels because of their attacks on Catholicism and other religious undertones. However, the Rizal Bill is the legal pawn of a Philippine state that strives to control education in order to fulfill its committed role of fostering moral character, personal discipline, civic conscience, and instructing in the obligations of citizenship (Necessary fiction, p. 4). This clearly illustrates the connections between literature and historical events that voters, policymakers, and other decision-makers should grasp.

### 1.3. Nation as an imagined community

According to the historian Benedict Anderson, nationalism is "imagined" in the sense that people who live in the same country do not always interact with one another but are linked by a shared emotion or attitude. In *The Story of the Untold Soldier*, where the soldier under the tomb is unnamed but others share the same sense of valor, this is the sense of camaraderie that characterizes a community. Even though the soldier is unknown to the general public as a person, the people are collectively aware of the hero's sacrifices made for the country, which is why there is an attachment and acknowledgment. Such "national imaginings" are universal among people of various backgrounds, in contrast to the traditional nationalist consciousness that is restricted by a nation's physical borders, a sense of camaraderie, and a sense of sovereignty.

The story argues that raising imagined community consciousness depends on the history of print capitalism, language, and religion. For instance, in the case of print capitalism, the widespread use of printed materials as texts and communication messages fosters a sense of community consciousness that deepens comprehension of regional events. The mass manufacturing of printed materials accelerates economic output and communication in addition to deepening shared sentiment and advancing knowledge and information. In fact, newspapers have always been the most significant print medium for communication throughout history since they were created nationally and disseminated extensively, giving readers a sense of community even if they had never met outside of their areas.

In terms of language, it should be remembered that Latin predominated in the old intellectual world. Latin was used to write all books and printed materials. The masses, who constituted a sizable portion of the population and lacked Latin education, were not in favor of such an elitist perspective. Because shared information was already printed in various vernacular tongues in addition to the permeating circulation of elitist Latin texts, the reproduction of texts in the various dialects paved the way for "vernacularization," meaning the spread of imagined community consciousness was inevitable. The Protestant Calvin was the foremost proponent of linguistic indigenization and was in charge of the mass production of secular messages in German and other languages and dialects that would appeal to a larger reading audience.

Beyond Anderson's creole mentality and elite-dominated dictums of governance, Southern Sudan's language crisis is caused by the insistence on English usage in indigenous areas (Kevlihan, 2007). Following such a declaration, the Sudanese community views the English language as having a direct impact on cultural encroachment. Some locals on the verge of extinction may not notice it, but elite language from creole nationalists does not last if not properly received. This perception is frequently stated by sensitive, well-educated people who have a passion for cultural preservation. Locals grow to admire such alien intrusion, though, when it serves their interests, thanks to some type of transformation and dispersion.

In general, Anderson views the imagined community as a sociopolitical construct that classifies nations as imagined, constrained, shared, sovereign, and as a community (Anderson, 1983). In fact, developing a collective consciousness among a group of people contextualizes nationalism as it is portrayed in the dialectics of "knowing without having met." When people share, read, engage with, and organize information for others they don't know, the sense of togetherness and shared consciousness flourishes in today's plethora of social media platforms.

## 2. Implications

Instead of its overall assemblage of an abstract feeling of oneness caused mostly by an invisible form of bondage with unfamiliar or unknown people within a certain nation, the aforementioned narratives merge around the theme of nationalism with a touch of communal sense. The numerous narratives that may not create a sense of national fabric make nationalist ideology difficult to hold within an isolating condition of communion. For instance, despite the fact that national literature is meant to liberate genuine expressions that strengthen social bonds, the nationalist agenda's cradle is more of a rhetorical exercise than a purposeful endeavor because so many aesthetic nuances obstruct the achievement of social realist goals. On the other hand, it necessitates a strong dedication and passion to the voices of struggle stated in the narratives, even with the supposition that literary text enraptures readers to a sense of devotion.

For example, a theatrical performance might serve as an example of the difficulty in highlighting the suffering of humanity while adhering to the artistic standards that obscure the performance's genuine purpose. Is a classic case of false consciousness currently active? It is true that the conflict between the message and the medium of the communication hounds artists and audiences when both sides prioritize learning how a national literature might be interpreted or misinterpreted with the same false consciousness.

Continuing with creole nationalism as a corollary subject, creoles who are newcomers to a foreign society will typically place value on assimilating themselves with local stories, problems, and situations since they will be better able to adapt to changing circumstances as a result. In a strange group, sitting about doing nothing is a symbol of exclusion and resignation, which might ultimately push people out. Immigrants who have settled in a new community essentially create their own space by building strong new relationships, picking up the language, and eventually assimilating into the community.

However, in another instance, the Zanzibar National Party, according to Glassman (2014), is a result of creole nationalism, with its mixing of dictums from Transnational Arab elites. This political hybridity suggests that the same old paradigms of cultural hegemony might supplant local senses through numerous discourses that combine indigenous and foreign sensitivities. Do creoles want to eradicate the sacredness of regional expressions in their purported endeavor to intrude upon indigenous communities in the wake of such political and cultural enigmas?

As a principle of localizing the global culture, such localization is equivalent to glocalization. It considers how the local is reflected in the global and vice versa (Robertson, 1995). However, simply producing hybrid expressions is insufficient because the local counterpart may be lost in the clash of cultures. Creole consciousness therefore advocates for immersion into the locals' real experiences rather than merely acknowledging cultural hybridity as a type of serenity. Given the adaptable character of creoles, new expressions in the local community localize the foreign entity with enough room to have an impact on society.

It seems natural that encroachment against indigenous "imaginings" inevitably pops out as a harmful influence of creole nationalism given the conquests sought by creoles in utilizing resources outside of their control. Since they weren't actually born in the area, the success of glocalization efforts actually depends more on their ability to comprehend the ingrained narratives of the place.

The concept of the mestizo (guy of mixed race), who finally rises to the position of power in developing nations like the Philippines because of familial ties, is a corollary to this idea. In contrast to native Mexicans, Ladinos with Spanish or half-Spanish origin regard themselves to be "whites" (Pitt-Rivers, J. (1969). Racial prejudice in Peru has its share of scandalous stories about its inferiority complex imposed on a dominating culture, although such racial mixing can be cured through education (England, 2001). Whether it is true or not, education is a force for social change because it transforms the mind from one that is weakly sensitive to the realities of change, as in the case of potentially shifted concepts of wisdom where students are made even more vulnerable to colonial intrusions. If not recognized critically, the same type of illness stalks a nation that values education.

When mestizos become influential, education might be divisive to an indigenous population that hasn't had access to such intellectual stimulation. From a different angle, the mestizos' ascent to economic significance was accompanied by an increase in their social stature (Wickberg, 1964). In the instance of Chinese mestizos who immigrated to the Philippines in the 19th and 20th centuries, the statement bears tautological significance. They had a crucial role in the development of Philippine society, helping to define the middle class more clearly and contributing to the creation of the Filipino national identity as well as the 1988 uprising in the country (Tan, 1986).

These days, they have sprouted up in the many villages around the nation with strong entrepreneurial operations, allowing them to maintain their economic and political dominance, which is why creole mentality has assimilated into the local mythologies.

Indeed, because of the colonial power's historical baggage, the effects of expanding control and dominance in a foreign land are far more obnoxious to the local sensibilities than can ever be envisaged. Creole nationalism can lead to dangerous designs of decadence if they are not thoroughly thought out. Hence, local leaders must emphasize the value of cooperation and communication in this regard in order to create harmonious relationships between all parties. Creoles and mestizos may know where they stand so as to avoid interfering in local affairs if they are aware of their positions and boundaries.

Finally, Anderson's understanding of the imagined community goes beyond the sharing of goals and ambitions; rather, it is a social construct that can only hold together when the social fabric is robust. In other words, there is a lot of possibility for relationship improvement and identity development when community members recognize how their actions affect one another. Despite how admirable this conquest may sound, there is a limited sense of community that goes beyond Anderson's request because the human condition is a huge expanse.

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